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SUMMARY OF THE APRIL 29 MEETING OF THE WESTERN FOREIGN MINISTERS

The Secretary opened the April 29 morning session of the Western Foreign Ministers Meeting by stressing that we must not go to Geneva on the Soviet terms with the discussion limited to the Berlin crisis, and that the Western package must be attractive enough to arouse support throughout the world, must be indissoluble and should contain proposals for an improved position for Berlin.

Brentano agreed to accept a French suggestion to raise the composition of the all-German committee to 25 for the Federal Republic and 10 for the GDR with a three-fourths majority required. The language concerning the implementation of proposals by the all-German committee was referred to the Working Group for redrafting so as to eliminate any implication that the all-German committee might give directives to the Governments or stand above the Government of the Federal Republic. The section on reunification of Stage III was also referred to the Working Group for refinement of the language.

The Germans opened the discussion of the security sections of the phased plan with a statement that, although the Federal Government agreed with the general principle of the establishment of security zones against surprise attack, it could not accept a more limited ground inspection zone restricted to Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and possibly Hungary. They suggested adopting the 1955 Geneva formula regarding areas of comparable size, depth and importance on both sides of the line of demarcation between a reunited Germany and the Eastern European countries with identical zones for aerial and ground inspection. The Germans also took exception to prohibition of the production of atomic, biological and chemical weapons, suggesting instead that the all-German Government be invited to extend to all of Germany the renunciation on such manufacture accepted by the Federal Republic under the WEU protocols, in so far as comparable waivers were accepted by the Soviet bloc countries. The Germans also opposed accepting a commitment not to station ICBM's in the security zone and Lloyd agreed. Brentano stated that while they do not object to force ceilings, the area of their application should be defined along the lines of the Geneva formula (areas of comparable size, depth and importance).

There was general agreement with the Secretary's view that since ground inspection would be difficult in the Arctic Zone, the provision for identical aerial and ground coverage should apply primarily to a European zone. Coove pointed out, however, that it was important to include some provision for inspection of US territory to preclude a Soviet argument that the Western proposal opened up Soviet territory without adequate compensation.

Coove then pointed out that: 1) the French could not accept a force ceiling of 750,000 since they now exceed this level in order to meet their Algerian commitments; and 2) they oppose formulation of general disarmament proposals

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which do not mention atomic weapons; indeed, they would be prepared to delete all reference to general disarmament in the phased plan if the others agreed. The Secretary suggested, and the others accepted in principle, the use of general language on force levels calling for reduction of armed forces to agreed maximum limits, for example, 2,500,000 each for the US and USSR.

The afternoon session opened with a discussion of the draft principles of a German peace settlement. The paragraphs on participation of various countries in negotiations on a peace settlement and on agreements of the Federal Republic and the GDR were referred to the legal experts for review, and possible wording changes. Other wording and order changes were agreed.

The Secretary opened the discussion on Berlin, stating that the US believed the phased plan should contain a positive proposal on Berlin and that the US favored the alternative of free elections throughout all Berlin under UN supervision coupled with a plebiscite on the retention of foreign troops and the removal of the GDR capital from East Berlin. Lloyd and Coove agreed, although Coove and Brentano expressed reservations concerning the plebiscite and the removal of the GDR capital. It was agreed these two points could be dropped. The Ministers agreed that a proposal along these lines for a Berlin solution would be included in Stage I of the phased plan, and that elections might take place in Stage II. It was further agreed that, if the Soviets agree to discuss Berlin in the context of the phased plan, the alternative of a status quo pending the reunification of Germany would not be included in the plan at the outset but could be brought out in discussion. The other Ministers agreed with the Secretary's suggestion that any discussion of the interim Berlin solution in isolation be reserved for Geneva and that this fallback-plan should be removed from the Western paper. It was also agreed that the initial Western proposal outside of the package framework would be the Western proposal contained in the phased plan.

The Secretary agreed, in view of anticipated internal political difficulties in the UK and Germany, with Lloyd's suggestion that a summary of the Western proposals be published when they are tabled. It was agreed that it would be better not to try to obtain agreement on a formal agenda, but we should insist on discussion of our principles for a German peace settlement if the Soviets want to table their draft treaty. It was also agreed that the West would try to avoid admission of the Czechs and Poles to the discussion but, if they had to agree, would insist on the participation of Italy.

The next meeting was scheduled for 10:30 a.m. April 30 to review the reports of the Working Group on the redrafted reunification, security and Berlin sections, and of the legal experts on the peace treaty section.

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